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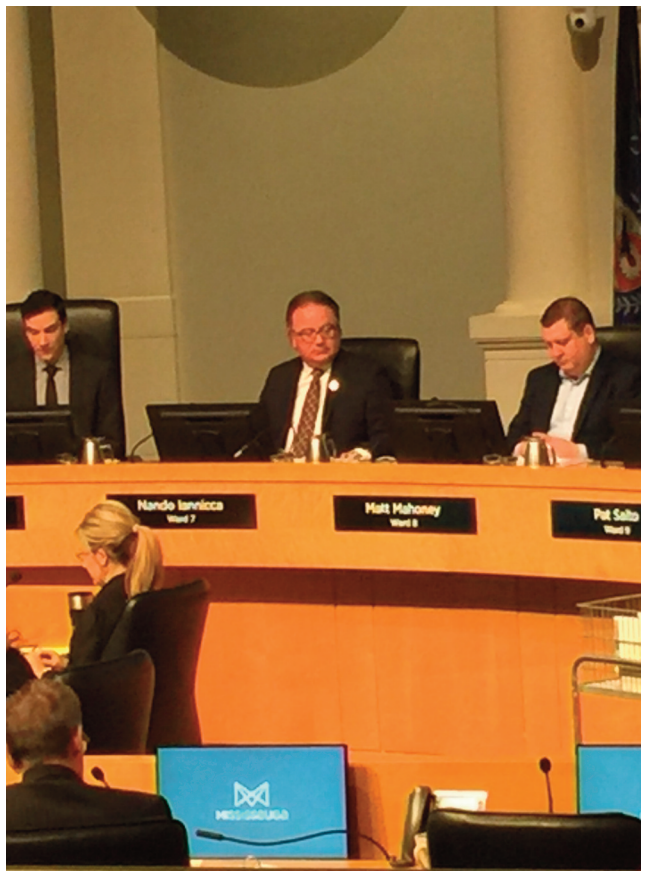
MISSISSAUGA | BRAMPTON | CALEDON

"I've done my share," says Nando Iannicca to end 30-year political career



by **Marco Patrone**

Councillor Nando Iannicca (right) speaks during a Mississauga City Council meeting on Jan. 24, 2018. (PDN File Photos)

Veteran Mississauga Councillor Nando Iannicca says he won't be running in the next election.

The Ward 7 politician who helped generate billions of dollars in new development in Cooksville told council colleagues Wednesday that he's ending his 30-year run in municipal politics.

"If I could write the headline," Iannicca told the Peel Weekly News, "it would be 'Ward 7 looking for new champion. Could you be the one?"

The lifelong Cooksville resident becomes the second veteran Mississauga politician not to run in the next municipal election, following the death of Jim Tovey last week.

Asked if Tovey's death made him re-think his decision given the leadership vacuum on council heading into the fall election, Iannicca said no.

"It's been 30-years," Iannicca told the Peel Weekly News. "For me and especially my family, it's the right time."

He consulted with family over the Christmas break but says the seeds of his departure were sewn four years earlier after the last campaign, his ninth. "When I won my last election, I said 30 years, 55-56 years old, I've done my share," he said.

Iannicca says he could've been "selfish" and waited until July before declaring his intention not to run again, but says he wanted to give other candidates an opportunity to get better known in the community.

"You can't take running in Ward 7 lightly. It's as big as London, Ontario, and if I wait until July, which I could, that's just not right. It's not going to give people a chance to consider it."

Now in his 56th year, Iannicca says quitting at this point in his life leaves him enough time to start a second career, though he doesn't know what that is yet.

"This is the last jumping off point. I can still be of some service for 10 to 12 years. If I was going to decide if I was going to die in my office as well, I've known other councillors that have done it. I'd like to think there's some other things I can do and give somebody else a chance."

His career hasn't been entirely free of controversy. Over a two-year span beginning in 2015, Iannicca billed taxpayers for expensive international conferences to hotspots including Italy, France, Hawaii and Dubai.

He defended those trips as being positives for Mississauga taxpayers, given the knowledge he'd be able to apply to his duties as councillor.

Iannicca's political career began at age 26. In an interview with the Peel Weekly News last November, he listed the number of projects he's been able to help move forward.

"After 30 years of getting everything to the precipice of what we wanted to do in my community, the building blocks that I put in place, all the sudden the time I thought I'd be moving on, the following comes cascading down; $1.4 billion LRT, we finally got our funding."

Iannicca believes he's been instrumental in getting the green light for a series of other major projects; "our new Mississauga hospital, we're getting 500 new beds. We're finally going to build the (Bus Rapid Transit line) on Dundas St. "and my plan for a Central park.